

MASSACHUSETTS RARE AND ENDANGERED PLANTS

SAND VIOLET (*Viola adunca*)

DESCRIPTION

Sand Violet is a small, tufted, short-hairy herb with dark blue to purple flowers. Its many stems are 0.8-3.2" (2-8cm.) high and erect at first anthesis (period when flower is fully open and functional), later to 6" (15cm.) high and tending to spread laterally. Each stem bears 1-3 flowers raised above the leaves, which are broadly triangular with a slightly cordate or heart-shaped base. Unlike most of our blue violets, flowers occur on leafy stems rather than on long, leafless stalks directly from the ground. The Sand Violet flowers from early May to early June.



SIMILAR SPECIES IN MASSACHUSETTS

Most blue violets in Massachusetts produce each flower singly on leafless stalks which emanate directly from the base of the plant. Sand Violet and Dog Violet (*V. conspersa*) produce one or more flowers on stems which also bear leaves and leafy bracts (a modified leaf subtending a flower). Dog Violet differs in its essentially smooth leaves and stems, blunter and more cordate leaves, much fewer stems per plant, and its habitat of rich mesic forests.

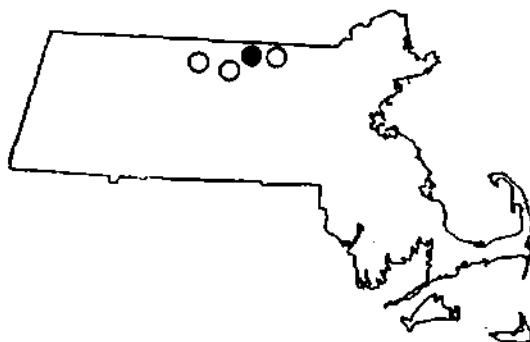
Britton, N.L. and E.A. Brown. An Illustrated Flora of the Northern United States and Canada. Dover Publications, Inc. 1970 reprint of 1913 ed.

HABITAT IN MASSACHUSETTS

Sand Violet prefers sandy or gravelly, sunny soil and therefore inhabits open clefts or boulders, dry, sandy clearings near streams or lakes, and open, dry, pine or aspen groves. Species found in association with Sand Violet include *Viola fimbriatula* (Northern Downy Violet), *Betula populifolia* (Gray Birch), *Fragaria*



Distribution of Sand Violet



● Verified since 1978
○ Reported prior to 1978

Distribution in Massachusetts by Town

(continued overleaf)

1985

SAND VIOLET (continued)

virginiana (Wild Strawberry), and Polytrichum sp. (Haircap Moss).

RANGE

Sand Violet ranges from Labrador to Alaska southward to Massachusetts, South Dakota, and California.

POPULATION STATUS

Sand Violet is an "Endangered" species in Massachusetts. There has been only one verified occurrence from 1978 to the present and only 4 historical occurrences, all along the northern border. The species is in jeopardy from forest maturation and succession.